



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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October 2, 2008

TO: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe 
Acting Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – STARSHINE
TREATMENT CENTERS, INCORPORATED – BUCKEYE, GARDEN,
LYNWOOD AND 40TH STREET GROUP HOMES**

We have completed a review of Buckeye, Garden, Lynwood and 40th Street Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Starshine Treatment Centers, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

The four Group Homes are each six-bed facilities, which provide care for boys ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Buckeye Group Home was providing services for three Probation children, Garden Group Home was providing services for three DCFS children, Lynwood Group Home was not providing services for any Los Angeles County children, and 40th Street Group Home was providing services for one DCFS child.

Buckeye, Garden, Lynwood and 40th Street Group Homes are located in San Bernardino County.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the Buckeye, Garden, and 40th Street reviews is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child

case records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Since Lynwood Group Home is not providing services for any Los Angeles County children at the time of our review, the monitoring review was limited to a facility inspection which covers basic child safety and licensing issues.

Summary of Findings

The Lynwood Group Home was well maintained. As a result, a corrective action plan is not necessary at this time. However, the Agency needs to address a few deficient areas for the remaining three Group Homes.

Buckeye, Garden and 40th Street Group Homes need to include all members of the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans and provide the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to all children. Garden Group Home also needs to inform children of their right to refuse psychotropic medication.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

WLW:MMO:DC:CC:sj

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Susan Kerr, Senior Deputy Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Raquel Cisneros, Board President, Starshine Treatment Centers, Incorporated
James Pace, Executive Director, Starshine Treatment Centers, Incorporated
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Buckeye Group Home
Highland, California 92346
License Number: 360909148
Rate Classification Level: 10**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Buckeye Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive and include short and long term goals. However, all members of the treatment team and input from the child are not included in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

1. Starshine Treatment Centers management include all members of the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing and items of necessity. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

- 2. Starshine Treatment Centers management provide children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.**

**Garden Group Home
San Bernardino, California 92404
License Number: 360910261
Rate Classification Level: 10**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Garden Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive and include short and long term goals. However, all members of the treatment team and input from the child are not included in the development or implementation of the NSPs.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

1. Starshine Treatment Centers management include all members of the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medications. However, children are not informed about their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

2. Starshine Treatment Centers management inform children of their right to refuse medication.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing and items of necessity. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

- 3. Starshine Treatment Centers management provide children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.**

**Lynwood Group Home
San Bernardino, California 92404
License Number: 366402532
Rate Classification Level: 10**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Lynwood Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

**40th Street Group Home
San Bernardino, California 92404
License Number: 360910260
Rate Classification Level: 10**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Buckeye Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: One

Comments:

The child meets the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. The child is assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plan (NSP) is current, comprehensive and includes short and long term goals. However, all members of the treatment team and input from the child are not included in the development or implementation of the NSP.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that the child is receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

1. Starshine Treatment Centers management include all members of the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plan.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: One

Comments:

The child is attending school. The child is provided with educational support and resources to meet his educational needs and is progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of the child's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

The child is provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: One

Comments:

The Group Home provides the child with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. The child is provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. The child also participates in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which he has an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, the child is not taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

The child is aware of his right to refuse medication.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Interview with child

Sample size: One

Comments:

The child is informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. The child reports that he feels safe in the Group Home and is provided with appropriate staff supervision. The child expresses satisfaction with the quality of his interactions with staff and reports that the staff treats him with respect and dignity.

The child reports that he is assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. The child is allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. The child attends religious services of his choice.

The child reports that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

The child reports satisfaction with meals and snacks. The child also receives voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: One

Comments:

The Group Home provides the child with appropriate clothing and items of necessity. The child is provided with opportunities to select his own clothes. Clothing provided to the child is of good quality and of sufficient quantity. However, the Group Home does not provide the child with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.

The Group Home provides the child with the required minimum weekly allowance. The child spends his allowance as he chooses.

The Group Home provides the child with adequate personal care items. The child is also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining a photo album/life book.

Recommendation

- 2. Starshine Treatment Centers management provide all children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.**

STARSHINE TREATMENT CENTERS, INC.
1255 E HIGHLAND AVENUE, SUITE 216
SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92404
(909) 882-7978 Phone
(909) 882-1282 Fax

April 21, 2008

County of Los Angeles
Department of Auditor-Controller
Children's Group Home Ombudsman Division
500 West Temple Street, Room 515-A
Los Angeles, Ca 90012-2706

Attn: Candace Rhue

We are responding to the recent inspection of our four facilities.

RE: BUCKEYE STREET FACILITY
LIC NO: 360911127 Correct Facility Number (360909148 Incorrect)

Recommendation – Starshine Treatment Centers management include all members of the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.

CAPP - The entire team at Starshine Treatment Centers has met and developed procedures to be implemented so that all individuals involved with our clients will have input into the "Needs and Services Plans". The team meets on a monthly basis and will review the goals for each child individually. Starshine Treatment Centers, Social Worker, will then complete the "Needs and Services Plan" and review the goals with the child. The Social Worker will then obtain his signature. The Social Worker will then review the plan with the family members, who are involved, to obtain their signatures as well. R. Meza, Supervisor, will then be given the complete report and will follow through with obtaining the remaining signatures needed. Ms. Meza on a monthly basis will review and ensure that all reports are being completed in a timely fashion, as well as ensuring that the team is following through with the procedures as they are stated above.

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Recommendation – Starshine Treatment Centers management provide children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.

CAPP – All clients in the past have received a monthly clothing allowance of \$40. As of this audit, all clients have been reimbursed their \$10. The reimbursement was retroactive to the month that they entered our program. As of April, 2008 all clients have received \$50 a month for clothing allowance. The clothing allowances will be issued on a monthly basis by Cecilia Pace and distributed to the Team Leaders of each facility. Cecilia Pace, Administrator, will be responsible for ensuring that the \$50 clothing allowance is issued to all Los Angeles County clients.

RE: GARDEN DRIVE FACILITY
LIC NO: 360910261

Recommendation – Starshine Treatment Centers management include all members of the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.

CAPP - The entire team at Starshine Treatment Centers has met and developed procedures to be implemented so that all individuals involved with our clients will have input into the “Needs and Services Plans”. The team meets on a monthly basis and will review the goals for each child individually. Starshine Treatment Centers, Social Worker, will then complete the “Needs and Services Plan” and review the goals with the child. The Social Worker will then obtain his signature. The Social Worker will then review the plan with the family members, who are involved, to obtain their signatures as well. R. Meza, Supervisor, will then be given the complete report and will follow through with obtaining the remaining signatures needed. Ms. Meza on a monthly basis will review and ensure that all reports are being completed in a timely fashion, as well as ensuring that the team is following through with the procedures as they are stated above.

Recommendation – Starshine Treatment Centers management inform children of their right to refuse medication.

The clients are informed of their rights when they first arrive at our facilities. On March 21, 2008 Starshine Treatment Centers had an “all staff in-service”. At this meeting all of our staff was informed/reminded of each client’s right to refuse medication. The Team Leader, Darlene

Rodenburg, held a house meeting for the client's in the Garden Street facility on March 13, 2008 and reminded them of their right to refuse to take their medication. Starshine has also included a statement on the clients "Medication Log and Count Sheet" which reads "I understand that I have the right to refuse my medication at anytime". Each time the client is administered medication he must sign the "Medication Log and Count Sheet" therefore he will be reminded of his right to "refuse medication". R. Meza, Supervisor, will be responsible for making sure that all "Medication Log and Count Sheets" have this statement written on the forms. Ms. Meza conducts weekly house inspections and will ensure the maintenance of this policy.

Recommendation – Starshine Treatment Centers management provide children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.

CAPP – All clients in the past have received a monthly clothing allowance of \$40. As of this audit, all clients have been reimbursed their \$10. The reimbursement was retroactive to the month that they entered our program. As of April, 2008 all clients have received \$50 a month for clothing allowance. The clothing allowances will be issued on a monthly basis by Cecilia Pace and distributed to the Team Leaders of each facility. Cecilia Pace, Administrator, will be responsible for ensuring that the \$50 clothing allowance is issued to all Los Angeles County clients.

RE: 40th STREET FACILITY
LIC NO: 360910260

Recommendation – Starshine Treatment Centers management include all members of the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plan.

CAPP – The entire team at Starshine Treatment Centers has met and developed procedures to be implemented so that all individuals involved with our clients will have input into the "Needs and Services Plan". The team meets on a monthly basis and will review the goals for each child individually. Starshine Treatment Centers, Social Worker, will then complete the "Needs and Services Plan" and review the goals with the child. The Social Worker will then obtain his signature. The Social Worker will then review the plan with the family members, who are involved, to obtain their signatures as well. R. Meza, Supervisor, will then be given the complete report and will follow through with obtaining the remaining signatures needed. Ms.

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Meza on a monthly basis will review and ensure that all reports are being completed in a timely fashion, as well as ensuring that the team is following through with the procedures as they are stated above.

Recommendation – Starshine Treatment Centers management provide all children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance.

CAPP – All clients in the past have received a monthly clothing allowance of \$40. As of this audit, all clients have been reimbursed their \$10. The reimbursement was retroactive to the month that they entered our program. As of April, 2008 all clients have received \$50 a month for clothing allowance. The clothing allowances will be issued on a monthly basis by Cecilia Pace and distributed to the Team Leaders of each facility. Cecilia Pace, Administrator, will be responsible for ensuring that the \$50 clothing allowance is issued to all Los Angeles County clients.

If I can be of further assistance please contact our office at (909) 882-7978.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cecilia R. Pace".

Cecilia R. Pace
Administrator